San Diego State University  
Dept. of Classics & Humanities  

Classics 304L — Latin Poetry (Catullus and Horace)  
MWF 12–12:50 — AL 109  

Dr. Brad Cook, office AL 632  
off. hrs. MW 11 & 2  
and by appointment (ask/phone/e-mail)  

phone: 594-4709  
e-mail: bcook@mail.sdsu.edu  
web: www-rohan.sdsu.edu/~bcook  
and via Blackboard  

COURSE CONTENT & GOALS: We read twenty-eight poems (293 lines) of Gaius Valerius Catullus (c. 84-54 B.C.) and fourteen poems (303 lines) of Quintus Horatius (Horace) Flaccus (65-8 B.C.) in Latin. We will review and expand our knowledge of Latin morphology and syntax while learning about Latin poetry. We will analyze and assess the beauty and genius of these poems, both in their ancient context and in the subsequent millennia during which these two authors were praised, translated, and imitated; we will integrate modern scholarly analysis, through journal articles and books into our examination. The content of these poems is often very personal, (probably) autobiographical, but also full of contemporary cultural, social, and political history, thus we will develop skills to read these poems as literary works in a cultural tradition as well as in the tumultuous historic events in the midst of which these two poets were managing, with some difficulty (Who wasn’t?), to live.  

also recommended: Charles E. Bennett, [New] Latin Grammar (Boston: Allyn & Bacon, 1908, frequently reprinted; currently in print through Bolchazy Carducci – www.bolchazy.com, but I recommend getting a hardcover, signature bound copy – www.sbebooks.com; this grammar is also available as a pdf – www.textkit.com)  

DAILY WORK: It is expected that you will spend at least two hours preparing for each class. Suggested steps:  
1. Read through a sentence (1-5 lines) aloud while paying attention to the meter and punctuation; look up vocabulary; figure out the syntax; do not write out a translation.  
2. Immediately repeat step 1.  
3. Once finished with a poem, reread the whole poem and re-look up any vocab.; write down any form, grammar, or content questions and/or thoughts; do not write out a translation.  
4. Later in the day and/or before class, reread poem(s); never write down a translation—as Plato said long ago, writing just gives us the opportunity to not know & remember things (Plato, Phaedrus 275a–b).  
5. Come to class with your Latin text and your written questions and observations on the poem—be prepared to translate and to discuss the poem.  

EXAMS: There will be two exams and a final which will consist of passages to be translated, grammar questions to be answered, and a short essay. The exams and final must be taken as scheduled, unless a documentable medical or family emergency arises. The first exam will be on Mon., Feb. 19; the second exam will be during the week before break. The final will be on Monday, May 14, 10:30–12:30 am.  

WRITTEN WORK:  
#1. Written and oral presentation on published translations of Catullus’ poems; guidelines anon, for Wk 8.  
#2. A commentary essay on a poem of Catullus or Horace (6–8 typed pages). Requirements:  
  a. Briefly introduce the poet, the chosen poem, and print side by side the Latin and your translation.  
  b. After reading at least three scholarly discussions, in books or articles, on your poem, and consulting at least three published translations, write at least five paragraphs that are each around half a page in length in which you discuss at least five different words, lines, and/or issues in your poem. Cite scholars and translators as “(Martin 1992, 146)” and include full bibliographic information in your Works Cited (guidelines attached).  
  c. Write a conclusion in which you summarize your observations and reflect on how these observations and this poem fit into the work of the poet, of Latin poetry, and of all poetry, to the extent that you are able.  
  I will read first (complete) versions as long as they are submitted by 4/20. Papers are due 5/8.  

ATTENDANCE POLICY: Civil, conscious attendance is required; all electronic devices are to be turned off and stowed. If you miss class, come see me during an office hour or schedule an appointment (after class or by phone, i.e., NOT by e-mail) immediately to discuss the missed material; it is your responsibility to speak with me about missed material. Absences can be excused for documented medical and/or family emergencies. If unexcused absences exceed a week’s worth of class (three days) your grade for the course will be lowered 3.33% per absence.  

GRADE: In-class translation and analysis (20), written work #1 (6), #2 (20), exams (17, 18), final (19)  

N.B. all work is to be your own; cheating and/or plagiarism will result in an F for the assignment, test, or course.